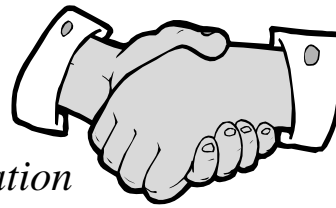


In Touch

The City's new monthly source for service information



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FINALLY, ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

What Form Of Local Government Does Salina Have and Where Did It Come From?

Local government is really where “the rubber meets the road” and “things get done.” Salina has what is referred to in Kansas as the “Commission-Manager” form of government. Outside of Kansas, it is better known as the “Council-Manager” form. Either way, we will refer to it as the C-M Plan. The C-M Plan was born out of the progressive reform movement during the early 1900s. It was a direct response to political bosses, big city corruption, and political patronage that was prevalent with traditional forms of government at that time. While the C-M Plan retains the positive aspects of traditional democratic government, it is designed to enhance professionalism and responsiveness by integrating elements from the efficient corporate model of management that sprang out of the industrial revolution.

Salina's C-M Plan is the purest form of professional local government available today. It starts with a City Commission comprised of individuals selected by voters citywide and without political party affiliation. This key structural element emphasizes professional governance for the whole, versus a traditional political structure that can often result in territorial wants and political infighting. The second primary ingredient of Salina's local government is the addition of a professional manager to oversee the day-to-day affairs of the community. This position is very similar to its private sector counterpart, the Chief Executive Of-

ficer; as it is dependent not on political partisanship or favors; but on education, experience and administrative ability. The City Manager is selected by the elected City Commission and answers directly to them.

The responsibilities of the City Manager are very straight forward. He/she is expected to:

- ▶ strictly carry out the legislative and policy guidance of the City Commission,
- ▶ annually provide a budget for the City Commission's approval,
- ▶ provide professional advice to the City Commission,
- ▶ manage the City's day-to-day operations;
- ▶ exercise full personnel authority over all departments;
- ▶ and find creative ways to make the community a better place to live and work.

The C-M Plan was born out of the progressive reform movement during the early 1900s as a direct response to political bosses, big city corruption, and political patronage...

Is The C-M Plan Similar To Local Government Structures Of Other Cities In Kansas And Across The Country?

Yes. In fact, the C-M Plan is very popular both in Kansas and throughout the rest of the United States. The first adopted Council-Manager form of government was in Staunton, Virginia in 1908. Dayton, Ohio was the first large city to adopt this form back in 1914. Since the early 1900s, many cities and towns across

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An informed citizen



is a better citizen!

America have adopted the Council-Manager form of government. Kansas was among those states leading the way by advocating professional, efficient government. In 1992, Kansas celebrated its 75th anniversary of professional city management. Today, some form of the C-M Plan is found in nearly one-half of America's cities and towns. Most of America's finest and most efficiently run cities use some form of the C-M Plan. It is so popular that even some counties are jumping on board.

What Prompted Salina To Choose the Commission-Manager Plan?

In the early 1900s, Salina had the traditional "Mayor-Council" form of government. The C-M Plan was discussed at length over many years and was actually voted down in 1911 and 1917. However, Salina was a growing community, and business leaders felt that it was time for a better, more responsive form of government. Some of the historical reasons that prompted the change included: Commissioners would no longer have to be specialists in public works, finance or law enforcement to feel comfortable running for City Commission; a City Manager can address services and the needs of the community on a full-time basis; and citizens know exactly where to go with a need or concern. In addition, citizens in Salina and across the nation considered the C-M Plan to be by far the most efficient form of government available.

As a result, with a population of approximately 15,000 and 1,708 total votes cast, Salina adopted the C-M Plan in 1921. At the polls, there were 1,284 votes in favor of the new form of government, while 424 voted against it. With support of

75% of those voting, this election demonstrated resounding and overwhelming support for Salina's new form of government — the same form of government that continues to demonstrate professionalism and efficiency across the country, and the same form of government that continues to diligently serve the residents and business people of Salina today.

Where Can I Get More Information About Our Government Plan? City Code?

For additional information on the Commission-Manager Form of Government, please check out the following resources:

In addition, citizens in Salina and across the nation considered the C-M Plan to be by far the most efficient form of government available.

City of Salina—City Manager's Office website: www.salina-ks.gov (Code Source Book) or call (785) 309-5700

League of Kansas Municipalities website: www.lkm.org or call (785) 354-9565

Kansas State Statutes website: www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-legisportal/index.do

International City/County Mgmt. Association website: icma.org

The Salina City Commission usually meets each Monday at 4:00 p.m. in Room 107 in the City-County Building. They also generally meet for a weekly Study Session as well, prior to the 4:00 p.m. meeting, in Room 107B. City Commissioners use these Study Sessions to discuss issues for upcoming meetings, but no action is taken during this time. Both meetings are open to the public.

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